



# Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman  
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August 1, 2001

## President Bush Presses Education Plan Before Urban League

In a speech before the Urban League today in Washington, President Bush said closing the achievement gap must be America's first priority. Excerpts from the speech are included below.

"[W]e know our schools today are not equal. The failure of many urban schools is a great and continuing scandal. Rarely in American history have we faced a problem so serious and destructive, on which change has come so slowly."

"The most basic educational skill is reading. The most basic obligation of any school is to teach reading. Yet earlier this year we found that almost two-thirds of African-American children in the fourth grade cannot read at a basic level. For white children, that figure is 27 percent. That gap is wide and troubling and not getting any better. That gap leads to personal tragedy and social injustice. In America, literacy is liberation -- and we must set all our children free."

"The ability to read is what turns a child into a student. First we learn to read, and then we read to learn. When this skill is not taught, a child has not failed the system -- the system has failed the child. And that child is often put on a path of frustration and broken confidence."

"For too long, many schools have been content to blame their failure on parents and poverty and circumstances beyond their control. Year after year, children without skills are passed along in schools without standards. Some see this social promotion as an act of compassion. It is, in fact, a form of discrimination -- the soft bigotry of low expectations. That bigotry has young casualties. And that bigotry must end."

Washington has increased education spending for 35 years without insisting on accountability. Now is the time to change the status quo.

### Message of the Day

**President Bush's focus on strong accountability will ensure that no child is left behind.**

- ❑ *States using federal education dollars must demonstrate results for students and that achievement gaps are closing between disadvantaged students and their peers.*
- ❑ *Parents should be empowered with detailed data about their children's schools, the quality of the education they're receiving and the progress their children are making.*
- ❑ *We should increase funding for programs that have proven effective and ensure that federal education dollars are targeted to where they will make the biggest impact for our children.*

### DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- H.R. 1 requires that states using federal education dollars prove that they are getting results for students of all races and income levels and that achievement gaps are closing between disadvantaged students and their peers. The House bill requires states to show improvements in subgroups, and to report data broken down by racial and ethnic groups and a number of other specific categories.
- The Senate bill uses a composite formula that would require states to show improvements in overall student performance.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

*"With 65 percent of our children barely able to read in the fourth grade, we have a very urgent challenge to deal with. We've got to do something about that or all sorts of bad consequences will flow."* -- **Hugh Price, National Urban League president, USA Today, August 1, 2001**